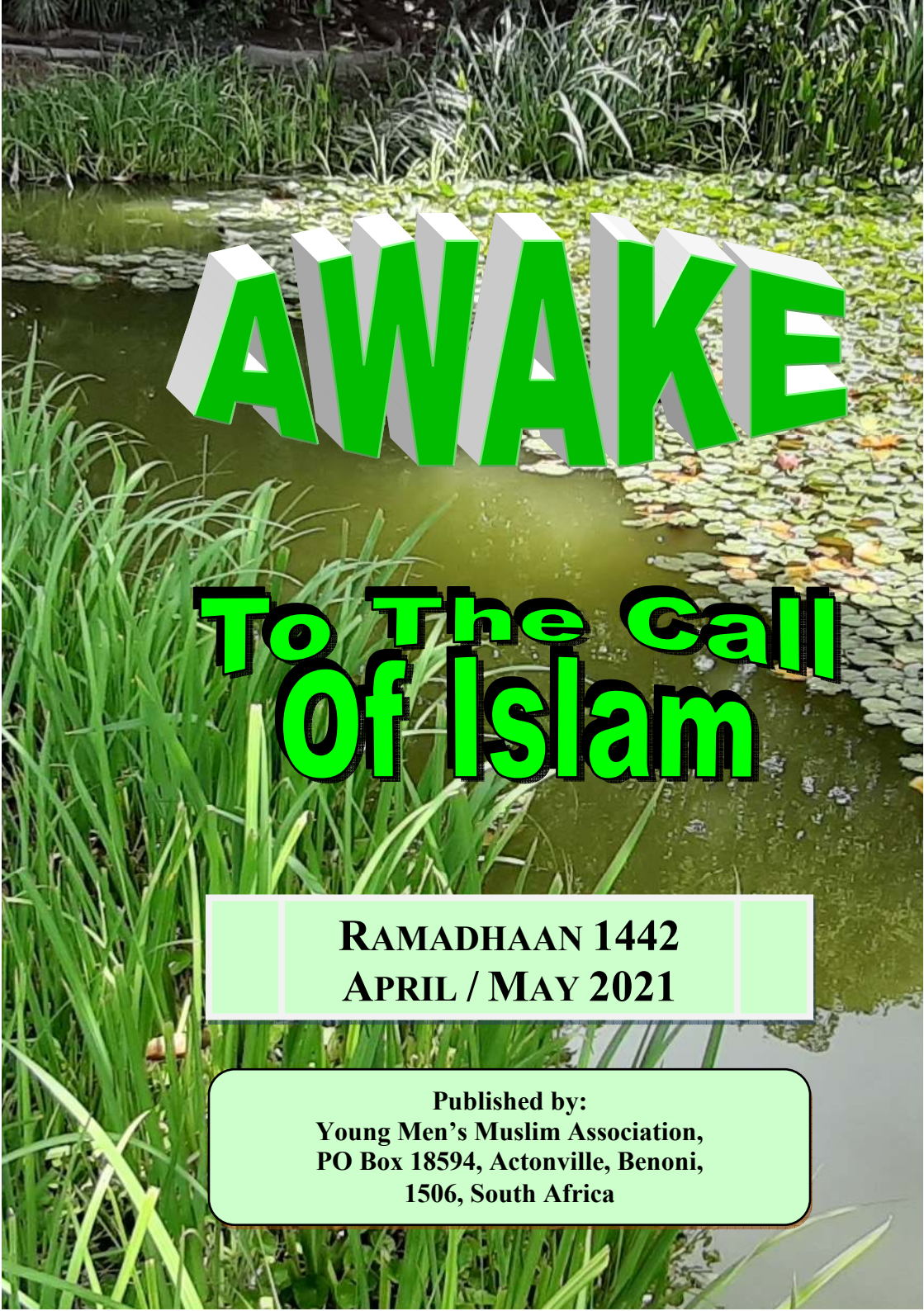




AWAKE

To The Call Of Islam

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A MONTH OF IBAADAT

The moments of Ramadhaan, whether night or day, are very auspicious. The thawaab for ibaadat is multiplied manifold during the month of Ramadhaan. Ramadhaan is not a month of feasting as many people think it is.

Womenfolk generally deprive themselves of much thawaab by wasting most of this holy time in the kitchen preparing delicacies. While there is nothing wrong in preparing delicious foods, they should not devote their full time to this pursuit. They should increase their ibaadat.

The time before iftaar is very auspicious. Dua is readily accepted during the moments approaching iftaar. The ending of the fast should coincide with the fasting person engaged in some form of ibaadat. As iftaar time heralds, the fast should be lightly broken with only some dates or water. There should be no feasting at the time of iftaar. Immediately after iftaar perform Maghrib and

Awwaabeen Salaat. Thereafter the feasting, not over-eating, may commence.

EID NIGHTS

The Nights of Eid too are among the holiest occasions. The Eid Nights are like the Night of Qadr. These Nights are not meant to be wasted in the kitchen or in unnecessary worldly pursuits. As much time as possible should be spent in communion with Allah Ta'ala.

THE STOMACH

Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: "The worst container which man can fill is his stomach."

Hadhrat Aishah (radhiyallahu anha) said: "The first bid'ah (innovation) which developed after the demise of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) was to fill (the stomach)."

The seat of all physical and spiritual diseases is the stomach. Eating to satiation, over-

eating and indulgence in delicacies on a full stomach corrupt both body and soul. It is for this reason that we have in Islam the principle of Qillatut Ta-aam (Reduction of Food). This is a principle and a practice instituted by Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and rigidly adhered to by the Sahaabah. The ahadith extol much the virtues of hunger.

SALAAT AND SINS

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) asked the Sahaabah:

“If there is a river at your door, and if you bath in it five times daily, will there remain any dirt on your body? What is your opinion?” They said: “Nothing of the dirt will remain.” Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: “That is the similitude of the Five Salaat. Allah effaces sins with the Salaat.”

Salaat performed correctly with its *aadaab*, observing all the Sunnat and Mustahab

factors, effaces sins. However, Salaat performed haphazardly without observing the Sunnah method, is rejected by Allah Ta'ala. According to the Hadith it is struck like a bundle of old rags onto the face of the person.

MUSIC

Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: "Verily, Allah sent me as a Mercy to the worlds and as a Guidance for the world, and He has commanded me to destroy musical instruments."

A REJECTED SALAAT

Salaat performed without observance of the Sunnat and Mustahab acts is rejected by Allah Ta'ala regardless of its legal validity. Rejection of Salaat refers to the negation of thawaab and the effects of the Salaat.

THE LESSER EVIL

In the Shariah there is a principle called Ahwanul Baliyyatain which means the ‘lesser of two evils or the lesser of two calamities. In terms of this principle, when one is confronted with two evils or two calamities, one should opt for the lesser one.

In some quarters this principle has been misunderstood.

Even some learned men misinterpret it, thus involving people in the commission of haraam. The operation of this principle is based on a condition. This condition is the non-existence of a lawful alternative. This principle cannot be availed of, if a lawful option exists. Only when confronted by two evils and there is no exit may this principle be applied. When there is simply no other-alterative, the Shariah orders that one should save oneself from the greater calamity by acceptance of the lesser calamity.

An example of the operation of this principle is given in the Qur'aan Majeed. Eating haraam meat is permitted to save one's life. When a person is in the dire straits of starvation and no halaal food is available, then to save oneself from death, consumption of even pork becomes permissible. The conditions for this permissibility are:

- (1) Total unavailability of halaal food of any kind whatever.
- (2) Eating only sufficient to save one's life. Eating to satiation is haraam as well as eating for taste or pleasure.

The two evils or calamities in this example are death due to starvation and consumption of haraam. The lesser evil according to the Shariah, not according to our logic, in this example is consumption of haraam to the extent of need.

A principle cannot be applied in isolation of its shuroot (conditions). It is not lawful to apply the principle and ignore the conditions

which are essential for the validity of the principle. Thus, if a halaal option is available, it will be haraam to apply the principle of Ahwanul Baliyyatain

Once this has been understood there will be no difficulty in applying this principle. However, if someone is simply bent on misinterpretation for the purpose of gaining nafsaani satisfaction, then there is no rational argument for such a person. This man of dhalaal is not the subject of this address. Some examples will be cited to illustrate the misinterpretation of this principle, which is generally motivated for the mismanipulation of situations at the behest of the nafs.

The question is asked: Is it better for a woman to work in her husband's shop or elsewhere in a stranger's business where she will be among ghair mahrams? Since the lesser evil is for a wife to be with her husband in his shop, misguided learned men advise that the woman should work in her husband's shop. Even though she will be constrained to commit many Purdah

violations and ruin her modesty in the purdahless environment of the shop. They argue that in view of it being the lesser evil, it is permissible for her to be employed in her husband's shop.

This fallacious argument has completely ignored the essential condition of this principle.

There is a third lawful- alternative available here, and that is adherence to the original command of Allah Ta'ala, viz., women should remain in the holy precincts of their homes. In the first instance it is haraam for women to emerge unnecessarily from their homes. It is the obligatory duty of the husband to ensure that he maintains his family. It is not the duty of the wife to earn and feed the family nor assist with this obligation. It is a kabeerah sin to pull her out of the sanctity of the home and plunge her into an environment of immorality and Hijaab violations. In this example, the woman is not compelled by anyone to choose between two evil options.

She simply has to reject both options and remain at home in obedience to the Qur'aanic command:

“And (O you women!) remain within your homes.”

It is better for a woman to participate in a thikr session in a Madrasah hall than to wander around in a hypermarket. Since ‘the lesser evil is the former, votaries of public halqah thikr claim that she should participate in this form of thikr. Again, the essential condition for the application of this principle is ignored. A woman is not under compulsion to either visit the hypermarket or to participate in the thikr session. Since there is no such obligation or compulsion or need for her, it is not permissible for her to invoke this principle. She has to simply reject both options and follow the Islamic injunction of remaining at home.

In fact, inviting women to participate in public lectures, thikr, Taraaweeh, etc., is not influenced by the principle of Ahwanul

Baliyyatain. It is simply a new-fangled teaching of misguided learned men who seek to justify their errors by resorting to misinterpretation of the principles and teachings of the Shariah.

KUFR

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“The Covenant between us and them is Salaat. Therefore, whoever abandons Salaat has committed kufr.”

Even if abandonment or neglect of Salaat is not based on rejection, it is tantamount to kufr. One who neglects Salaat, his Imaan dangles on a thread. There is never a valid excuse for neglecting Salaat.

According to the Hadith, missing Asr Salaat is tantamount to the destruction of a man's family and wealth, and his good deeds are eliminated.

NOT TO BE DELAYED

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“O Ali! Do not delay three things: Salaat in its time. Janaazah when it is present. Marriage of a woman when a suitable husband is found.”

THE TWO STANDARDS

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“He who sets out (to the Musjid) for Fajr Salaat, has set out with the Standard (Flag) of Imaan, and he who sets out for the market, sets out with the standard (flag) of Iblees.”

The most beloved places for Allah Ta’ala are the Musaajid, and the most detestable places are the markets, malls, and the like. Those who head to the places of trade and commerce in the morning instead of the Musjid for Fajr Salaat are the standard bearers of the Devil’s flag. They are deprived

of Allah's protection and blessings (barakaat). They remain under the influence of Iblees.

DUA

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said that the Dua made between Athaan and Iqaamah is not rejected. It is a time for ready acceptance of Dua. The *Maqbooliyat (ready acceptance)* is further enhanced if one happens to be fasting.

RUSHING TO THE MUSJID

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“When the Iqaamah for Salaat has been said, do not rush towards the Salaat. Approach walking with dignity. Perform what you obtain (with the Imaam), and complete whatever you have missed.”

Most people have the tendency to run or rush when the Jamaat has commenced in order to avoid missing a raka't. Rasulullah (Sallallahu

alayhi wasallam) forbade this. If the delay for missing even Takbir Tahreemah is due to negligence or involvement in worldly activities, then such delay and missing the Takbeer or a Raka't is sinful. If the delay is unavoidable due to valid reasons, there is no need to rush.

THE MUSAAJID

“The most beloved places to Allah are the Musaajid, and the most abhorred places are the marketplaces.”
(Hadith)

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) further said that whoever sets off to the Musjid in the morning or during the evening, Allah Ta'ala will arrange a special feast for him in Jannat. Among those who will be under the Shade of Allah's Arsh (Throne) on the Day of Qiyaamah when there will be no shade anywhere, will be those whose hearts were attached to the Musjid. When they leave the Musjid, they yearn to return.

For every step taken to the Musjid, one is elevated a rank, a sin is forgiven. As long as he is in the Musjid in ibaadat, the Malaaiakah present shower barakaat (blessing) on him.

SIGNS OF THE HOUR

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said that among the Signs of Qiyaamah will be lofty ornate Musjid structures. Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: *“I have not been commanded (by Allah) to construct lofty Musjids.”*

Hadhrat Abdullah Bin Abbaas (Radhiyallahu anhu) narrating a Hadith said: *“Most assuredly you will embellish the Musaajid as the Yahood and Nasaara embellish (their temples).”*

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: “Among the Signs of the Hour is that people will vie with one another in (building) Musaajid.” Also among the Signs of Qiyaamah is the “raising of voices in the Musaajid”.

KAFFAARAAT – EXPIATIONS

Allah Ta'ala said to our Nabi (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam): “O Muhammad! Do you know what the Malaikah (in the Heavens) are discussing?” Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“They are discussing about Kaffaaraat (Expiations). The Kaffaaraat are: To remain in the Musjid after Salaat; walking on foot to the Musjid for Jamaa-aat Salaat; performing perfect Wudhu during unfavourable conditions (e.g. cold, sickness, etc.). He who does this, lived a life of righteousness, and he dies with righteousness. He is purified of sin as he was the day he was born.

These virtuous acts expiate for sins.

IN ALLAH'S ASYLUM

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said that three kinds of people are in the asylum of Allah Ta'ala. They are under Allah's protection. (1) The Mujaahid in the

path of Allah. (2) A man who goes to the Musjid. (3) A man who enters his home with Salaam (i.e. saying: *Assalaamu Alaikum*).

The Musaajid are sanctuaries for the Mu'mineen. Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said that when a calamity/punishment descends from the Heaven to afflict the transgressors, Allah Ta'ala diverts it from the Musaajid. This is the general rule.

Some Musaajid being afflicted with calamities do not negate what Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said. When Muslims themselves pillage and plunder the sanctity of the Musjid and they fail to observe the *huqooq* of the Musjid, the Musjid itself invokes Allah's *La'nat* (Curse) on the community. Then as a punishment, Allah Ta'ala decrees that the calamity should settle on the Musjid as well.

Next to Musjidul Haraam in status is Musjidul Aqsa in Jerusalem. About seven times in its history did Allah Ta'ala hand

over Musjidul Aqsa to the kuffaar and allowed them to defile, desanctify and destroy it. This was a punishment for the Muslims. The time will still come for the destruction of the Ka'bah at the hands of the kuffaar. In fact, the Munaafiqeen and Murtaddeen who are currently holding sway over the most sacred Musjids of Islam, have already instituted the process for the destruction of Musjidul Haraam and Musjidun Nabawi.

When Muslims themselves morally and spiritually destroy the Musjid, then Allah Ta'ala will not grant them asylum and protection in the Musjid. His *Athaab* will overtake and pulverize them wherever they may be, even in the Musaajid. However, genuine Mu'mineen derive peace, comfort and tranquillity in the Musjid. Some Buzrug said: "*A Munaafiq in the Musjid is like a wild bird in a cage, and a Mu'min is like a fish in the water.*"

HAJJ AND UMRAH

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said that the reward of a person who sets out from home with wudhu to go to the Musjid for Jamaat Salaat, is like the thawaab of a Haajji in Ihraam. The one who sets out from home with sincerity to the Musjid to perform Dhuha/Chaasht Salaat, is like the reward of one who performs Umrah.

The reward of one who performs Salaat after a Salaat without engaging in futility in between is recorded in *Illiyeen*. (*Illiyeen is the Abode where the Arwaah –Souls – of the pious people reside in peace after their earthly death*).

The thawaab of Hajj and Umrah is daily available for sincere Mu'mineen. The reward of performing Ishraaq Salaat is also one Hajj. Looking at the faces of parents with affection is the equivalent of a Hajj. If one looks at their faces multiple times, one attains the thawaab of multiple Hajj.

THE GARDENS OF JANNAT

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“When you pass by the Gardens of Jannat partake of its fruits.” The Sahaabah asked: “O Rasulullah! What are the Gardens of Jannat?” Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: “The Musaaqid”. They asked: “O Rasulullah! What is it to partake of its fruit?” Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

‘Subhaanallaahi wal Hamdulillaahi, wa laailaha ill al laahu wal laahu Akbar.’

ALLAH’S CURSE

“Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) cursed women who visit the graves (qabrastaan), and those who construct Musaaqid over graves and light lamps (at the graves).”

GRAVE-WORSHIP

Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) supplicated to Allah Ta'ala:

“O Allah! Do not make my grave an idol to be worshipped. Allah’s Wrath is severe for people who made Musaaqid of the graves of their Ambiyaa.”

In another Hadith Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) cursed the Yahood and Nasaara for having made the graves of their Ambiya places of worship. Among the Muslims are those who have exceeded even the Yahood and Nasaara in grave-worship. They are the Barelwi sect of India.

A cardinal practice of their religion is to worship the graves of the Auliya. Sajdah and tawaaf of the graves are among their practices of shirk. They make vows in the names of the Auliya who are inmates of the graves. They supplicate (make dua) to the Auliya instead of to Allah Ta'ala. The graves

are decorated with expensive bedding and food is placed on the graves.

The variety of acts of grave-worship has transformed these people into mushriks.

SALAAT NOT VALID

Once Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) saw a man performing Salaat with his *izaar* (*lower garment*) hanging below his ankles. Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) instructed him to renew Wudhu and repeat the Salaat. When someone asked the reason for renewal of Wudhu, Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said that the Salaat was not valid. Allah Ta'ala does not accept a Salaat if the trousers is below the ankles.

This is the rule applicable to all haraam acts perpetrated during Salaat. Salaat performed with the clothing of the kuffaar, with jeans, T-shirt, with logos inscribed on the garments, with short sleeves exposing the elbows, with such tight-fitting pants which display the form of the buttocks, etc. is NOT VALID.

Salaat in such a reprehensible manner has to be incumbently repeated. The offensive clothes should be discarded. If deficiency of Imaan does not allow the criminal to completely abandon the haraam western/kuffaar dress style, then at least he should ensure that when performing Salaat he is dressed correctly so that at least his Salaat is not flung back into his face from the heavens like a filthy rag as is mentioned in the Hadith.

REPEAT YOUR SALAAT

Wearing the trousers on or below the ankles is haraam at all times. The sin is aggravated if this haraam style is adopted in Salaat. Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) had ordered not only the repetition of the Salaat. He had ordered also renewal of Wudhu.

The same command will apply to Salaat performed with the devil's mask (i.e. the corona virus mask). In fact the stricture regarding this mask is more severe in view of

the fact that it is accompanied by the kufr belief of disease being contagious, and also because it is in flagrant violation and rejection of Rasulullah's prohibition of face covering during Salaat.

SALAAT WITH THE MOCK 'BURQAH'

Question:

I usually wear a half burqah and pants when performing Namaaz. The burqah is just above the waistline. An Apa told me that my Namaaz is not valid with this burqah. She said that I should repeat my Namaaz. Is she correct? What happens with the Namaaz which I had performed in the past with such a burqah?

Answer:

The Apa is 100% correct. With the cloth which in terms of the Shariah is not a burqah, your Namaaz is not valid. For a Muslim female it is shameless for her legs to be exposed. Pants are not sufficient covering

for the legs. You should make qadha of your past Namaaz.

PRESCRIBING AURAAD TO THE SPIRITUALLY DISEASED

Hadhrat Hakimul Ummat said:

“Nowadays most Mashaa-ikh (i.e. the junior guides who feel that they have become great Shaikhs) have understood that only *auraad*, *wazaa-if* and kaifiyaat are the Maqsood (goal) of Tasawwuf. (*Auraad* and *Wazaa-if* refer to formula of thikr. Kaifiyaat are spiritual states which develop in the wake of abundance of *wazaa-if* and *auraad*).

They prescribe these rituals regardless of the mureed being filled from head to toe with spiritual ailments (Akhlaaq-e-Razeelah). Reformation of the nafs is not considered necessary by these people. But *wazaa-if* are believed to be incumbent. Diseases cannot be cured in this way.

On the contrary, in this state there is a greater danger of the diseases becoming more destructive. If in a spiritually diseased person develops some kaifiyaat in consequence of the observance of *auraad* and *wazaa-if* he will be deflected life-long. He will not then be bothered about his spiritual ailments. He will believe that he has attained the goal. It is obvious that this attitude is most dangerous for the mureed. In spite of being diseased, he will not understand this. Ailments cannot be cured by means of *auraad* and *wazaa-if*.”

TASAWWUF MISUNDERSTOOD

Hakimul Ummat Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thaanvi (rahmatullah alayh) said:

“The avenue of tarbiyat has been completely closed. Even the Mashaa-ikh are not concerned with it (tarbiyat). A collection of a few things has been called Tasawwuf (Durwaishi and Buzrugi). Neither is there any firmness on A'maal (righteous deeds) nor on correctness of statements. Whatever is desired is done, and whatever comes to the

mouth is blurted out. The field of tarbiyat is extremely delicate.”

TARBIYAT

Tasawwuf is *Tarbiyat* or moral training. It is *Islaah-e-Nafs* (the reformation of the nafs) which consists of the suppression and control of the evil emotional qualities known as *Akhlaaq-e-Razeelah*, and of the cultivation of the noble attributes of moral excellence called *Akhlaaq-e-Hameedah*. This is the sum total of Tasawwuf, nothing more and nothing less.

While Fiqh deals with the Shariah’s rules pertaining to the *zaahiri* body (the external / physical side), Tasawwuf is concerned with the rules of the *baatini* dimension of the human body, i.e. with the Rooh, Nafs and spiritual heart. But today even among those who are supposed to be sheikhs and khalifas, there prevails stark ignorance of the scope and function of Tasawwuf. The avenue of *Tarbiyat* as mentioned by Hakimul Ummat has been closed by this ignorance.

THE GUIDES

The spiritual guides of this age are themselves lost in diversions and in activities which are unrelated to Tasawwuf. While some guides assign *Tarbiyat* a secondary or an insignificant pedestal, most of the new crop of khalifas which have recently mushroomed are blissfully ignorant of their duty and obligation. As stated by Hadhrat Thaanvi (rahmatullah alayh), a few items or man-made rituals have been lumped together and presented as Tasawwuf when in reality these rituals and exercises are not within the scope of Tasawwuf just as the matters of Fiqh are not within the scope of Tasawwuf.

THE EMPHASIS

The emphasis of those who are supposedly the spiritual guides is on prescribed forms of thikr which are not related to the Sunnah. Although there is much benefit in the various *athkaar* prescribed by the senior Mashaa-ikh for their mureedeen, these are spiritual medicines and treatments for spiritual ailments and for the acquisition of concentration, etc. These exercises are not

the goals of Tasawwuf. But lack of understanding of the true meaning and goals of Tasawwuf has deflected the khalifas from the fundamental function of *Tarbiyat*. Now they emphasise group thikr, public thikr ceremonies and the like in the same way as the Ahl-e-Bid'ah have become addicted to.

DEFLECTION

Most of the newly appointed guides have become deflected from the Path of Tasawwuf. They themselves do not understand *Sulook* (the Road), hence they lean on the crutch of these exercises to keep themselves going and groping in their newly-acquired spiritual 'offices' which for many of these young guides are means for satisfying their *hubb-e-jah* (love for fame). They themselves suffer from all the ailments which they are supposed to doctor. But they do not even understand what their function as spiritual guides is.

Apart from suffering from all the ailments (*Akhlaaq-e-Razeelah*), of greater concern and danger is their ignorance of the *Tareeq* – of

Tasawwuf. Some Shaikhs have opened up a gateway for considerable spiritual harm by appointing even the most unqualified persons to the pedestal of *masheekhat* (or being spiritual guides).

If a physician himself is suffering from disease, he can still diagnose and prescribe as long as he is qualified and an expert in the field. But if he is a quack, then he constitutes a danger to the life and limb of his patients. Similarly, the unqualified spiritual guide who has no understanding of Tasawwuf and its goals (*Maqaasid*) constitutes a grave danger to the Akhlaaq and Imaan of those whom he has initiated as mureeds.

A FALSE COVER

Some of these guides have devised their thikr sessions to cover their inability of providing spiritual guidance and *tarbiyat* to their mureeds.

Their *ta'leem* or the emphasis of their *ta'leem* is prescribed *athkaar* which to them is the very soul of Tasawwuf. Their 'naseehat' is pure conjecturing of the mind. Far from

indicating the Road (Sulook) to their muredeen, they imprison their underlings in deception, spiritual retrogression and deviation.

The spiritual ailments of the mureeds are not treated because the guides themselves possess no understanding in this sphere as well as for some other reasons which Hadhrat Hakimul Ummat mentions and which appear on page 31 (prescribing auraad to the spiritually diseased).

THE WAY OF SENIORS

The *tareeqah* of our Akaabireen in the field of Tasawwuf was always to treat the spiritual ills of their mureeds. Never did they emphasise on *athkaar* and *ashghaal*. But in the present day the complete opposite is being practised by the new crop of khalifas. They are at pains to justify their diversion from true Sulook by citing such modern-day mashaa-ikh who are among the *asaaghir* (juniors) and who cannot in any way be compared with the *Akaabir Mashaa-ikh* of Tasawwuf.

If the prime occupation of a spiritual guide – Shaikh-e-Tareeqat – is not *Tarbiyat*, he should not be accepted as one's guide. Such a 'guide' will be a misguide and deflect the mureed from the true Goal which has to be pursued and attained. Minus *Tarbiyat*, *wusool* (attainment of the Divine Goal) is not possible. In this, there are no two opinions. Therefore, never be hasty when pledging allegiance (becoming bay't) to a person.

ADVISING THE GUIDES

Hadhrat Thaanvi (rahmatullah alayh) advising the spiritual guides who endeavour to increase the numbers of their circle (by indiscriminate bay't) and who refrain from reprimanding their mureeds and who abstain from Amr Bil Ma'roof for the fear of losing followers, says:

“These people who claim to be exponents of Tasawwuf and leaders (in this field), should think of the time when they will be alone in the grave without any comforter. Will they be

able to gain glitter (in the grave) from their circle of mureeds? If the answer is in the negative, then they should develop here something which will provide light and glitter for them in the grave. And that is the Bond with Allah Ta'ala. Allah's Bond is adequate for enhancing the dazzle of one's circle.

Therefore, attend to the ailments of mureeds irrespective of the number of mureeds increasing or decreasing (as a result of reprimanding and rebuking)."

THIKRULLAH THE PURPOSE OF LIFE

The purpose and perpetual occupation of insaan (man) is remembrance of Allah (Thikrullah). Man is required by Allah Ta'ala to be permanently in His remembrance in all states and conditions of life. The Qur'aan and Hadith are explicit in this ta'leem. Thus the thikr which is not the goal of Tasawwuf is the prescribed formulae which the Mashaa-ikh

have developed and introduced for enhancing the power of concentration.

The special (non-Sunnah) forms of *athkaar* as well as the *ashghaal* (exercises and penances) should not be confused with the perpetual Thikr which is incumbent on all Muslims in all conditions of life.

SHIAH ABUSERS OF THE SAHAABAH

Hadhrat Ibn Umar (radhiyallahu anhu) narrates:

“Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

‘When you see those who abuse my Sahaabah, then say (to them): The la’nat of Allah on your shirk.’ ” (Tirmizi, Mishkaat)

Commenting on this Hadith, the author Mullah Ali Bin Sultan Muhammad Al-Qaari, says in his Sharah Mirqaat:

“This implies that their curse (or abuse) rebounds on them. They are the votaries of evil and mischief. On the other hand, the Sahaabah are the people of virtue who are deserving of the mercy and pleasure (of Allah).”

In another authentic Hadith it is said:

“In the last of ages will be a community called Raafizah (Shiahs). They will abandon Islam. Therefore kill them, for verily, they are mushrikeen.”

In Islam the punishment for murtaddeen (renegades) is death. Those who revile the Sahaabah and brand them as munaafiqeen and kaafireen are themselves murtaddeen.

Another Hadith states:

“They will relate themselves to the *Ahl-e-Bait* while in reality they are not of the *Ahl-e-Bait*.

FUTILE DEEDS

A Buzrug said:

“A man who practises seven deeds and refrains from seven deeds, his deeds are futile. These are:

- (1) He professes fear for Allah but does not abstain from sins.
- (2) He hopes for reward from Allah but abstains from virtuous deeds.
- (3) He wishes to do good, but do not resolve to do so.
- (4) He supplicates (makes dua), but abstains from practical effort.
- (5) He recites Istighfaar, but has no regret.
- (6) He externally does good acts, but abstains from moral reformation.

(7) He makes effort, but lacks ikhlaas (sincerity).”

(Faqeeh Abu Laith)

WHAT IS SULOOK?

“Sulook actually means the reformation of character and deeds. But people are completely indifferent in this regard. Those who are somewhat concerned with Islaah, they imagine that wazeefahs are sufficient for Islaah-e-nafs. While all the Silsilahs emphasise Islaah-e-Nafs, this emphasis is more in the Chishtiyyah Order.”

(Hakimul Ummat)

SOME DECEPTIONS OF SHAITAAN

Shaitaan is a shrewd conspirator. He paints his traps in a variety of hues to lure his victims. To people of the Deen he approaches via Deeni channels. To people of the Madaaris, he approaches via Ilmi avenues.

Shaitaan has the greatest aversion for Ilm-e-Deen. With the weapon of Ilm, the Aalim neutralizes the plots of shaitaan. There are, therefore, numerous calamities in the path of the student pursuing Deeni Knowledge. In the present age, shaitaan's task of diverting students has been vastly simplified by Madrasah Asaatizah (Teachers) themselves. The disease of moving further and further from the ways and methods of the Akaabir Mashaa-ikh has opened the door wide open for shaitaani manipulation of the Asaatizah, the students and the systems regulating the Madaaris. Among the methods shaitaan has introduced to deflect Deeni students from both Ilm and Islaah are the following:

- Bay't has been portrayed as almost compulsory. Involvement in athkaar detracts students from their primary occupation.
- Debate and lecture sessions.
- Serving as 'apprentice' teachers in co-ed institutions which are under the

control of such men and molvis who have no regard for the Shariah.

- Practising the art of writing articles.
- Practising the art of public-speaking.
- Indulgence in kuffaar sport with the blessings of the institution.

DIVERSIONS

Let all Madrasah managements understand well that the new ways introduced in the Madaaris and Daarul Ulooms of today are negatory and destructive of the progress of the Students. It is time that the authorities of the Madaaris do some soul-searching. They surely cannot be so mentally blocked to fail to understand that the wonderful ways and system of the Akaabir who had established the original Daarul Ulooms cannot be inferior to any system whatsoever. But, the roohaani blockage has over-shadowed the intelligence; hence the Darul Uloom authorities see goodness in liberalism and in the ways of secular institutions.

They feel that the system and syllabus of the Akaabireen have outlived their utility and are not suitable for these times. It is for this reason that they are increasingly modelling the Daarul Uloom along western kuffaar patterns.

On account of this treason committed by the Madrasah authorities, the Deeni institutions of learning are today bereft of Taqwa. The aims of students and of Asaatizah are mercenary and worldly. The Deen and Aakhirah are the furthest from their minds. They pursue Deeni knowledge with corrupt motives. Therefore, the evils of western secular institutions have crept into even the madaaris and the Daarul Uloom. May Allah Ta'ala save us from these calamities.

ADVICE FOR THE KHALIFAS

The first requisite for a spiritual guide is for him to constantly examine himself. He should be concerned with his own islaah, more than what he is concerned with the islaah of his mureeds.

The shaikh should not hanker after a following. He should not intentionally embark on any plan to increase his circle of mureeds.

The one who has just been appointed a khalifah by some buzrug should not become swollen headed and bloated with ujub and takabbur. This is generally the case with khalifas who are not Aalims. He should not labour under the notion that he has attained the goal of Tasawwuf by virtue of his appointment. In fact, as long as his own insignificance, inability and inexperience are not discernible to him, he should understand that he suffers from many spiritual ailments.

It is common, especially in this age, for unqualified persons to be appointed as khalifas. The appointing Shaikh is misled by an external show of piety of the mureed. The Shaikh mistakenly believes his mureed to be qualified for masheekhah, hence he appoints him as a khalifah. It should be understood that Mashaa-ikh are not Ambiya. Their

decisions are not corroborated by Wahi. They too err.

NOT A CERTIFICATE

The appointment of a mureed to the pedestal of masheekhat is not a certification of Wusool (i.e. having attained the Goal “of Tasawwuf, viz., Allah Ta’ala). It does not mean that a man who has been appointed a khalifah has become a buzrug or durwaish by virtue of the appointment.

It is therefore necessary that prospective mureeds thoroughly scrutinize the man – his life and actions – before they enter into bay’at with him.

ISLAAH

The shaikh should concentrate and emphasise on moral reformation, not on athkaar and ashghaal. To assist him in this delicate task, he should consult the works of Hakimul Ummat Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi (rahmatullah alayh) or of some other recognized Senior Mashaa-ikh whose silsilah he is following. He should not parade his opinions because he is no mujtahid in the field of Tasawwuf. Adherence to the advices,

methods, principles and teachings of the Akaabir Mashaa-ikh is absolutely necessary.

Some sheikhs are duped by their nafs which fans their ego and nafsani desire of ujub (self-esteem). They therefore organise public thikr gatherings. This pomp and imagined glitter give them immense satisfaction. But the Akaabir with whom we are linked did not engage in such practices.

OUR MASLAK

“I consider it a great bounty of Allah and His grace that He has bestowed to me the ability to remain on the Maslak (Spiritual Path) of our seniors (Akaabir Mashaa-ikh).” – Hadhrat Hakimul Ummat

Deviation from the Maslak of the Akaabir Mashaa-ikh is deviation which is the product of following the maslak of the Nafs.

ULTERIOR MOTIVES

When a man who is supposedly a spiritual guide craves for initiating mureeds into his circle and goes to the disgraceful level of instructing his ‘khaadims’ to persuade and pressurize ignorant people to enter into his allegiance (bay’t), it indicates the crookedness of his intention. His desire is to bolster the number of his following. He believes himself to be worthy of a big following. He hankers after the nafsaani desire of fame and perhaps he suffers from greed of wealth because usually bay’t of this type comes along with its perks of hadaayah (gifts to the shaikh).

This attitude of these spiritual guides is mercenary. Such ‘guides’ in the words of Hadhrat Thaanvi (rahmatullah alayh) are dacoits who rob people of their Imaan.

It is most dishonourable for a spiritual guide to desire that people enter into his circle. It is even more dishonourable for him to canvass for mureeds.

Regarding the desire for increasing one's circle of mureeds, Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thaanvi (rahmatullah alayh) said:

“I do not like latitude in bay't. The only result of this (i.e. of the policy of indiscriminate bay't) is the increase (in one's following) of people of corrupt understanding and little intelligence. I am not enlisting volunteers for an army. It is sufficient to have a (spiritual) relationship with a couple of intelligent persons.”

FEMALE MUREEDS

The issue of initiating female mureeds is very delicate. However, the inexperienced spiritual guides of this age have no hesitation in this sphere. They unhesitatingly and eagerly accept females into their bay't. Some even do so without the husband's permission.

Women should be extremely wary of guides who adopt a free and an informal attitude with them. Hijaab is of imperative

importance. The shaikh is a ghair mahram, hence all the Shar'i rules of Hijaab apply strictly in relation to him. Bid'ati peers (guides) are notorious for taking advantage of their female mureeds. This evil is slowly creeping into the ranks of guides from even our School of Thought (Maslak).

SHAMELESS

One such spiritual guide insisted that his female mureed discusses all her problems and matters personally with him telephonically, not via correspondence. This shameless shaitaan is a highway robber in the pursuit of robbing the unsuspecting and stupid woman of her hayaa (shame) and akhlaaq (morals).

Another shaikh again would go with his car to pick up his female mureed from her place of work where she was working under supervision of her husband. This so-called guide brazenly takes the woman away from her husband presenting the excuse that he wants to do her 'islaah' in privacy where the husband is not allowed to be present. Later

when the husband who was also his mureed could no longer tolerate this lewdness, he gave his ‘shaikh’ the boot.

DRAWING ATTENTION

Some young sheikhs or khalifas are keen to draw the attention of female mureeds to them. They will invite their female disciples to discuss just everything with them. The females are expected to report every trivial argument they have with their husbands and take advice.

Let it be well understood that it is not within the scope of the shaikh’s function to embroil himself in the private and marital life of his mureeds. He should not advise people on the choice of marital partners nor should he conduct himself in any way that will induce the woman to behave audaciously towards her husband. He should not decide any dispute between husband and wife. If the matter pertains to Shar’i fatwa, he should refer them to a proper Mufti. At most, he should make dua for his mureeds so that Allah Ta’ala alleviates their problem.

The shaikh should not converse telephonically with his female mureeds. He should not request them to prepare any foods or delicacies for him as is the disgraceful habit of some of these guides. The female mureeds should not eat of any left-over food of a young shaikh thinking it to be food of barkat. If the shaikh is an old man of outstanding taqwa it will not matter. But, for a young shaikh to send the plate of his left-over crumbs to the ladies of the home where he has been invited for meals is shameless and not permissible according to the ruling of the Fuqaha.

When a ghair mahram male has ate of the food or drunk of the water, then she should not eat and drink the food and water. It is Makrooh for her to do so. The same is true for men when they are aware that a particular female had drunk water from the glass or ate from the food in a plate. The psychology allurements has been well understood by the illustrious Fuqaha.

WARNING OF THE AULIYA

The Akaabir Auliya and Mashaa-ikh have warned against the display of tenderness towards female mureeds. In fact, they have made it very clear that inclination and tenderness shown to female mureeds are spiritually destructive.

NOT SINLESS

Spiritual guides are not Ambiya. They are not ma'soom (sinless). They possess all the emotional and human frailties. Women in their innocence and ghaflat should not become over-trusting of their shaikh. If they observe the slightest misconduct in him, they should immediately sever their bay't ties with him.

A shaikh is in a position of trust. Women according to the Qur'aan Majeed are Ghaafilaat (trusting, oblivious and gullible). They labour under the impression that their shaikh is a paragon of Taqwa and there is absolutely no spiritual or moral dangers by freely associating with him. This is a fatal error. When either the mureed or the shaikh

relaxes his/her guard, the nafs will overwhelm them and plunge them into the worst evil. May Allah Ta'ala save us all from the evil lurking in our nafs.

TRUE EXCELLENCE

Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thaanvi (rahmatullah alayhi) said:

“When true excellences have developed in a man, he dissociates from futility and nonsensical things. He has no need for observing customs. Whenever I see a man involved in the trappings of external adornment, I understand that he is bereft of true excellences hence his involvement in futility.”

THE PIETY OF FORMER DAYS

“The ordinary pious people of former days were a hundred thousand times better than the mercenary mashaa-ikh of the present times.”

Alas! Prominent persons of the Deen, even Molvies, nowadays are sending their children for western education. This indicates the little respect and honour for the Deen in their hearts. It is indeed a grave danger for the children of pious Ulama to pursue western education.”

(Hadrath Maulana Ashraf Ali Thaanvi)

DESTITUTE WOMEN

According to the Shariah, men are the maintainers of women. It is, therefore, the Waajib duty of the mahram males of a destitute woman to maintain her. This duty devolves first on the male Asbah relatives, i.e. from the father's side. If there are no such relatives or if they refuse to shoulder their responsibility, the duty will be the responsibility of other relatives from the mother's side.

If all the relatives refuse to aid the destitute woman, this obligation will devolve on her neighbours. If they too shirk their

responsibility, then the whole community will be responsible.

FARDH-E-KIFAAYAH

Caring for the destitute is a Fardh-e-Kifaayah obligation on the community of Muslims. But, in the execution of this fardh obligation, the community fails miserably. Many women are forced to leave the precincts of their homes to earn a living because their relatives and the community have failed to take care of them.

Some women who have been divorced find themselves in dire straits. Yet, no one comes to their aid in spite of the existence of many societies and welfare organisations with big signboards outside their offices to advertise their welfare activities.

Those who are involved in ‘welfare’ work should acquit themselves more responsibly and show greater consideration for the suffering of destitute women.

Consider this case: A cruel husband involved in an illicit affair with an immoral woman, mercilessly assaults his wife, even breaking her ribs. He demands that she should leave his house with her three children. She has no place to go. Her brothers and other relatives shamelessly and cruelly refuse to aid her in any way. Around her are a number of welfare societies, even Ulama societies advertising their social-welfare activities. Yet, none of them is prepared to aid this woman in distress.

The whole community will be answerable to Allah Ta'ala for this cruel dereliction of a Waajib duty.

In cases of this nature, the Muslims or the responsible and concerned Muslims of the locality should firstly endeavour to talk some sense into the beastly husband. If they fail, arrangements should be made to acquire a house for the lady. All members of the local community have to financially assist in this noble charitable work. As Muslims, we are not expected to behave selfishly and simply

shrug off the problems and hardships of others. As far as possible we should come to their aid.

SIGNS OF BEING A JAHANNAMI

Once when Hadhrat Haatim Asam (rahmatullah alayh) passed by a gathering of Ulama, he said:

“If three things are not found in you, Jahannum is incumbent on you.”

When he was asked about the three things, he said:

- (1) Regret for the day which went by without ibaadat and without repentance for sins.
- (2) Consider today being a wonderful opportunity for reforming yourself.
- (3) Fear for tomorrow. What will happen to you tomorrow? Will you attain salvation or destruction?

The spiritual condition and Imaan of those who are lacking in these three essentials are indeed lamentable.

IKHLAAS

Hadhrat Haatim Asam (rahmatullah alayh) said:

“Allah Ta’ala has placed ikhlaas (sincerity) in solitude.”

The more a person mingles and associates with people, the more will his ikhlaas become eroded until finally he is bereft of sincerity. The best way in which to safeguard ikhlaas is to remain aloof from people. In this way one is saved from the calamities of the tongue and from other evils which all bring about the elimination of ikhlaas.

TAQWA

“Taqwa has a special bearing on the development of wisdom and depth of knowledge.”

(Maulana Ashraf Ali Thaanvi)

THE WORLDLY PROSPERITY OF THE KUFFAAR

“Do not let the movements of those who are kuffaar in the cities deceive you.” (Qur’aan)

The material prosperity, technological progress and scientific advancement of the kuffaar should not awe Muslims. This is the purport of the aforementioned aayat of the Qur’aan Majeed. Their worldly progress is not something to hanker after. All such progress will be short-lived. At the end of this earthly road there is nothing but everlasting perdition and Jahannum for the kuffaar. Far from being enamoured with the phantoms of kuffaar progress, Muslims should pity them.

However, instead, Muslims in this age have become victims of self-pity. They feel deprived if they lack the material prosperity which the kuffaar, especially western kuffaar enjoy. Ignorance of the purpose and goal of earthly life has engendered this false perception in Muslims.

WITHIN THE LIMITS

Pursuing worldly prosperity which includes scientific and technological advancement, should be only within the confines of the Shariah and only as means for sustaining this worldly life. Since Muslims have fixed technology as the goal of life in their mistaken concept of the attainment of material perfection, they cast overboard the Shariah without hesitation when their worldly aims clash with the Law of Allah Ta'ala.

Denouncing this conception, the Qur'aan Majeed says:

“Verily, the life of this world is only play, amusement and mutual competition (in pride)

in the (the accumulation) of wealth and children.”

Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“Verily, this world has been created for you, while you have been created for the Akhirah.”

We are therefore allowed to take from this world only what is necessary and that too lawfully according to the commands of the Shariah. While this dunya is the ultimate goal of the kuffaar, it is only a provision for the Muslim in his worldly sojourn until he reaches Home in Jannat.

OBEDIENCE TO PARENTS

The importance of obedience to parents is of such a high degree that the Qur’aan couples it with the command to abstain from committing shirk with Allah Ta’ala. Disobedience to parents has far reaching consequences in both worlds.

In this world, the disobedient child is deprived of barkat and peace. Before his death he will be overtaken with punishment for his disobedience and ingratitude to his parents. The calamity of worldly punishment for disobedient offspring extends to the point of Maut (death). There is the grave danger of such ingrates leaving this world without Imaan.

A FEARFUL EPISODE

Hadhrat Alqamah (radhiyallahu anhu) was a great Aabid (Worshipper) among the Sahaabah. Hadhrat Anas Bin Maalik (radhiyallahu anhu) narrates that Alqamah (radhiyallahu anhu) was a young Sahaabi who made rigorous efforts for the Deen. He was extremely generous with Sadqah. Suddenly he was overtaken by a severe illness. His wife sent word to Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam).

Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) sent Hadhrat Bilaal, Salmaan, and Ammaar (radhiyallahu anhum) to visit Alqamah (radhiyallahu anhu). On their arrival, they

found Hadhrat Alqamah in his death throes. They made talqeen of the Kalimah, but Alqamah was unable to recite it. Hadhrat Bilaal (radhiyallahu anhu) was sent to inform Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) of this extremely perturbing situation.

On being apprized of Alqamah's condition, Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) enquired about his parents. He was told that Alqamah had an aged mother living. She was sent for.

When she arrived, Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) enquired about the life of Alqamah. She said: "He performed Salaat in abundance. He fasted much and he was extremely generous in giving Sadqah."

Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: "How was his relationship with you?" She replied: "I am displeased with him. He always preferred his wife to me and obeyed her more than me."

Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) informed her that on account of her displeasure, Alqamah was unable to recite the Kalimah. However, his mother who was very displeased with him, refused to forgive. Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) instructed the Sahaabah to gather a large pile of firewood. He said: “Bilaal, gather firewood so that I may burn out Alqamah.”

When his mother learned that Alqamah would be thrown into the fire, she could not bear it. Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said that the punishment of Allah is worse than this worldly fire. If she desired that Allah forgives her son, she should first forgive him. Alqamah’s mother then quickly proclaimed that she had forgiven her son and that she was now pleased with him. As she made this proclamation, the Kalimah flowed from the tongue of Alqamah (radhiyallahu anhu) and he died with Imaan.

Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) commented: “By Allah! Without you

forgiving him, his Salaat, Saum and Sadqah will not avail him in any way.”

Nabi-e-Kareem (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) performed Alqamah’s Janaazah Salaat. After burying Alqamah, Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) delivered an inspiring and heartrending lecture in the Qabrustaan. He commented: “O Assembly of the Muhaajireen and Ansaar! Listen! He who prefers his wife over his mother, on him is the *la’nat* of Allah. Neither his Fardh nor Nafl acts of ibaadat are accepted (by Allah).”

DISOBEDIENCE

This episode demonstrates the grave consequences of disobedience to parents. It is among the worst sins which bodes evil for the Imaan of the disobedient offspring.

However, it should be understood that the obedience commanded by the Shariah relates to only lawful wishes and instructions of parents. As long as the desire and instructions of parents are lawful in the Shariah and it does not entail violation of the rights of the

wife or of anyone else, it will not be permissible for the child to disobey. The son has to give priority to the wish of his parents.

Wives should therefore understand that marriage does not mean that their husbands should sever their ties with their parents, nor does it give them (wives) priority over the husband's parents. The wife's right to live separately has to be executed in a way that does not constrain the son to violate the rights of his parents. If for example, the parents are averse to their son moving out of their home, he should remain. But at the same time the wife should be given her separate living quarters in the same house. The parents of her husband will not have the right to invade her privacy in her own quarters nor enter her room without her consent.

The Shariah has prescribed rules and given advice for all situations. However, ignorance leads to violation of rights and extremes.

THE TAALIB-E-ILM

For the true success of the Student of Deeni Ilm, it is imperative that he develops a single purpose in his mind. Everything which has no direct bearing to Ilm is a diversion and a threat to his pursuit of Ilm. The primary, in fact the only, occupation of the Taalib-e-Ilm should be his kutub (the text books). He should fully engross himself with his kitaabs.

Night and day should become equal for him. Holidays are something alien to the true Seeker of Knowledge. A student who looks forward to holidays and who wastes his time in other activities during the holiday period renders grave injustice to his pursuit of Ilm.

The Student of Deeni Ilm has no time or inclination for extraneous issues. Mutala-ah of the Kutub and cultivation of Taqwa are the only two things which the true Taalib-e-Ilm understands. Without Taqwa the knowledge is barren; devoid of Divine Noor.

CONCEDING ERROR

Hadhrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thaanvi (rahmatullah alayh) said:

“At least a man should have the decency to concede his own errors. Conceding one’s error is also a kind of expiation (kaffaarah which compensates for the error).

The feeling of independence (in which one clings to one’s error, in fact justifying it) and veering away from the truth is extremely destructive. It completely destroys the noor of the heart. The baatin (soul) becomes spiritually barren.

This attitude of independence is the product of takabbur (pride). Pride is nowadays being portrayed as independence. In fact shaitaan had adopted this independence. Everyone is aware of the result.

THE EVIL OF THE OLYMPIC GAMES

The following report provides some insight into the immorality and wholesale zina which are integral constituents of the Olympic Games – games in which almost all Muslim countries participate. In fact, participation in these immoral games is considered a great honour. Surely Qiyaamah cannot be far off.

Sex popular at Games

SYDNEY – Paralympians are overdosing on the Friendliness of the Sydney Games with 50 000 condoms used after eight days in the athletes' village, medical staff said yesterday.

That equals about seven condoms per athlete or official staying at the Game village.

Condoms and lubricants of all colours and flavours are stored in a giant goldfish bowl in the medical centre which is refilled every day.

A second batch of 20 000 condoms has been shipped in to replenish supplies.

One athlete who readily admits sex is constantly in his thoughts is Australian swimmer Alex Harris. After winning silver in the 100m freestyle on Wednesday night he told reports: “I’m gonna get sex tonight.” – Sapa-AFP

FEMALE DRESS STYLE

Generally three factors render a female’s dress haraam. These are:

- (1) Tashabbuh bil kuffaar
- (2) Tashabbuh bir rijaal
- (3) Immodest dress

Any one or more of these factors make a dress haraam for Muslim women.

TASHABBUH BIL KUFFAAR

Tashabbuh bil kuffaar means emulating or imitating a non-Muslim dress style. All kuffaar styles of dress which come into vogue from time to time fall in this category of prohibition.

Even if a new styled dress adequately covers the body and is loose-fitting, it will remain haraam if it is adopted by Muslim females on the basis of it being a new style developed by the kuffaar.

From time to time, dress-styles change, especially in this day and especially female styles. When a new-fangled style is introduced, even Muslim women abandon their normal dress and opt for the new style of the kuffaar.

Changing from one style to another is a significant development. It is indicative of a change which has taken place in the mind – in one's thinking. Why would a Muslim woman abandon an 'old style' garment for a new-fangled style introduced by the kuffaar?

It is abundantly clear that the only reason for adoption of the new style of the kuffaar is a preference for the ways of the kuffaar. This preference by itself is akin to kufr. According preference to a style or way of the kuffaar and abandoning an Islamic style for this purpose is in fact kufr.

Thus, abandonment of an Islamic dress for a kuffaar dress has far-reaching and detrimental consequences for our Imaan. It is not something which could be viewed lightly.

IMMORAL

Generally, kuffaar dress styles, especially for females, are immoral even if the garment is ankle-length and spacious. Consider the present trend of slits in a woman's dress. Whether the slits are in front, on the sides or on the back of the dress, the motive for creating such slits is immoral and the style is designed for the specific purpose of attracting gazes and arousing carnal passion in males. In short, it is a zina – inviting garb.

Indeed, one may ask: ‘What is the purpose for a dress to have a slit in the back as is the style nowadays? What is the aim of having a long slit in the dress on the front? Every stupid person – Muslim or non-Muslim – is fully aware of the shaitaaniyat of these styles. There is no need to dilate further. It will suffice to say that such dresses are haraam. This type of dress is prohibited in view of two of the factors of prohibition – imitating the kuffaar and immorality.

Regarding Tashabbuh bil kuffaar, Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“Whoever emulates a people, is of them.”

TASHABBUH BIR RIJAAL

Tashabbuh bir rijaal means emulating or imitating males. In regard to such male emulation, Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) had invoked the *la’nat* (curse) of Allah Ta’ala on women who imitate men and vice versa.

It is Islamically extremely evil for a Muslim woman to don garments which are designed for men or to wear clothing which resembles the dress of males or to adopt garments which are dubbed unisex. These are truly shaitaani-inspired dress styles. It does not behove a Muslim woman who believes in Allah and the Last Day to don such evil and accursed clothing thereby bringing herself in direct line of Allah's *la'nat*.

Just as emulating the kuffaar is haraam so too is emulating males. This prohibition is so serious that Allah's *la'nat* has been invoked on such females by Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). Muslim women should, therefore, understand that donning the kuffaar unisex garments is not something to take lightly. The first known being who suffered the curse of Allah Ta'ala was shaitaan himself. Women who imitate males in any way whatsoever, especially in dress-style, join the ranks of the *Mal'oon* people (the accursed ones).

IMMODEST DRESS

Every type of dress designed to attract attention, especially of males, is immodest and immoral. First in line of immoral and immodest dress is transparent or translucent dress through which the skin and hair are visible or semi-visible. Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said that on the Day of Qiyaamah numerous women who had worn clothing on earth will be naked. They will be the women who had worn immodest, scanty and immoral dress here on earth as well as those women who wear tight fitting garments which reveal the body- shape.

The *la'nat* of Allah Ta'ala and of His Malaaikeh descend perpetually on such women.

IN PRIVACY

Many people ask whether it is permissible for married women to wear normally prohibited dress in the privacy of the home for the pleasure of their husbands. Is this permissible?

While certain acts which are not permissible in public will be permissible if women do them in the privacy of their homes, it does not follow that this permissibility is a licence for all haraam acts as long as it is done inside the home for the sake of the husband. The husband is not the woman's creator. Her first allegiance is to Allah Ta'ala. If the husband's commands, orders or wishes are in conflict with Allah's Shariah, obedience to him in such haraam acts and wishes is not permissible.

SATR

There is no satr and hijaab between husband and wife. Although it is not dignified Islamically for the spouses to appear in front of one another in complete nudity like asses, nevertheless, it is not sinful. While it is not sinful for a woman to bare her head in the privacy of her home, the Angels of Mercy do not visit a home wherein the women parade around with their hair exposed.

But, this permissibility does not legalize unisex garments even inside the home

because Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) has cursed such women. While scanty and immodest dress for the pleasure of the husband will be permissible in privacy, male clothing will not be permissible even if the husband orders her to dress in such accursed garb.

Similarly, garments which are the styles introduced by the kuffaar like the daily changing fashions, are also not permissible even in the privacy of the home.

ISLAMIC DRESS

Any kind of dress which is not a specific fashion of the kuffaar, and it embodies the essential ingredients of adequate concealment as advocated by the Shariah, will be an Islamic dress if the community has adopted it or it has come down from generation to generation. To abandon such an Islamic style for a new fashion of the kuffaar is haraam.

MUSHTABAH FOOD

When the permissibility of anything is in doubt, it is termed Mushtabah. Food becomes haraam on account of any haraam ingredient in it or if it was procured with haraam money.

When there are conflicting rulings regarding the permissibility of an item, a doubt enters and the item becomes Mushtabah. Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) ordered abstention from Mushtabah saying that those who indulge in Mushtabah will ultimately fall into Haraam.

The attitude of treating Mushtabah lightly and freely indulging in it with reckless arrogance as has become the practice of many learned men who have become experts of distortion and misinterpretation is repulsive. When indulgence in Mushtabah opens up the avenue of Haraam, how can Muslims, especially learned ones, justify indulgence in it. The emphasis of the Shariah is on abstention, not indulgence. But it is

indeed lamentable to observe that men learned in the Deen assigning abstention from Mushtabah to the category of such – Taqwa which they mention with sarcasm as if Taqwa is something obscure and exclusive with such Auliya who inhabit the wildernesses and the forests.

WHEN IS A MAN A VALID MAHRAM FOR A JOURNEY?

Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) branded a woman who goes on a journey without a valid Shar'i mahram as one who does not believe in Allah and the Day of Qiyaamah. A woman who proceeds on any journey without a valid mahram, be it for Hajj, is cursed. Her ibaadat is rejected and she remains under the *la'nat* of Allah Ta'ala and His Angels as long as she is on the journey and away from her home.

WHO IS A VALID MAHRAM

A mahram refers to a male who is a close relative of a woman with whom marriage never was permissible nor will ever be

permissible. Father, grandfathers, sons, maternal uncles, paternal uncles and nephews are in this category.

A woman is allowed to go on a journey with these mahram males. However, there are two conditions which qualify a mahram to be valid for accompanying the female. These are:

(1) Buloogh (adulthood)

(2) Aadil (uprighteous)

If the male is under 15 years, he will not be adequate for being the mahram of a woman on a journey.

If the mahram is baaligh (an adult) but is a faasiq, i.e. not uprighteous, then too it will not be permissible for a female to travel with him even if he happens to be her father or son.

MISUNDERSTANDING

A grave misunderstanding is that as long as the male is an adult and a close relative, a woman can travel with him. When the mahram cannot fulfil the duties for which he has to accompany the woman, his companionship with her is meaningless, in fact detrimental for her Imaan and Akhlāaq (character).

HIS DUTY

The duty of the Shar'i mahram is to safeguard the honour of the woman with whom he is travelling. He has to attend to all her needs and affairs along the journey. He has to protect her and ensure that she remains in *hijaab/purdah*. It is his *Waajib* duty to keep her safe from all aspects of moral *fitnah* to the best of his ability.

If the mahram is a *faasiq*, he will obviously be careless and unconcerned in such matters which the Shariah imposes on him. The most important duty of the mahram is to guard the **hijaab** of the woman. A modernist/*faasiq* in the first place does not believe in the

Qur'aanic *ahkaam* of Hijaab. He is not concerned with whom the woman will speak and mingle nor does he see anything wrong with strange men conversing with the woman. Such a mahram is vile, shameless and dishonourable. Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) described such a mahram as a *dayyooth* (*evil cuckold*).

He is NEVER an adequate mahram for a woman on a journey. It is haraam for a woman to go on a journey with such a mahram even if he happens to be her son.

EVIL PRACTICES

Another misunderstanding is the idea that as long as a mahram is accompanying the woman, other males may also travel in the same vehicle on pleasure trips. It should be well understood that to do so will be permissible only when necessary. But to plan a pleasure trip or a holiday from home in such a way that all and sundry travel in the same vehicle, is not permissible.

The common holidaying practice is for a man to travel together in the same vehicle with his sisters-in-law or other females for whom hijab is waajib (obligatory). Even if a mahram is with, the purpose of his companionship is defeated and negated in this situation. Contact with ghair mahram males with its evil moral consequences is an almost certainty in this situation.

INCOMPETENCE

A lad who has just become baaligh (attained puberty) although technically a valid mahram, will be inadequate for the journey if he lacks full jurisdiction over the female with whom he is travelling. His companionship is meaningless if he is unable to exercise authority over the woman. If the woman travelling with him is domineering and refuses to obey him in Shar'i matters, then such a mahram is not adequate for the journey because he will not be in position to fulfil the duties of mahramiyyat which the Shariah imposes on him.

This is the same as a lawful guardian of a minor. If the guardian is unable to fulfil the duties of guardianship, custody of the minor may not be assigned to him notwithstanding his initial right of guardianship.

Nowadays, people are extremely careless in these matters. Women go in droves on journeys, especially Hajj journeys either without mahrams or with incompetent mahrams. Instead of the Hajj journey being an ibaadat of thawaab, it is transformed into a journey of athaab (punishment).

RASULULLAH'S ADVICE

Hadhrat Anas Bin Maalik (radhiyallahu anhu), one of the most senior Sahaabah, was in the service of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) from the age of 8 years. He narrates the following special naseehat (advice and admonition) which Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) gave him:

He says that Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said: “O Anas! Make wudhu

properly. There will be barkat in your age and the guarding Angels will love you.

Be thorough in ghusl-e-janaabat, for there is impurity under every hair. Sins are then forgiven.

Perform Dhuhaa (Chaasht) Salaat without fail. This is the Salaat of the Repenters.

Perform Salaat (Nafl) night and day. The Angels will supplicate specially for you.

Fulfil all the arkaan of Salaat correctly. Allah will love you. He accepts such Salaat.

If you are able, inculcate the practice of being permanently with wudhu. At the time of Maut, you will not forget Kalimah Shahaadat.

When entering your home, make Salaam to the inmates. This will bring about sweetness of Imaan and the sins along the road (which were unintentionally) committed will be forgiven.

Do not harbour malice and envy for any Muslim for even a moment.

This is my way. Whoever adopts my way loves me. Whoever loves me will be with me in Jannat. O Anas! If you guard my wasiyyat and naseehat, and you practise it, Maut will become beloved to you. In Maut, peace is concealed for you.”

SHAITAAN IN THE HUMAN BODY

“Verily, shaitaan flows in the human body like the flowing of blood.”

Commenting on this Hadith, Hadhrat Ibraaheem Shahr (rahmatullah alayhi) said: “Shaitaan is filth and so is blood, hence the two harmoniously coexist. He thus permeates the human body and flows in every vein like blood flows.

On the other hand, Thikr is pure and celestial just as the Rooh (Soul) is. These two Purities

harmoniously coexist. There is therefore, a natural congeniality and compatibility between the Rooh and Thikr.”

When man engages in Thikr, shaitaan flees in leaps and bounds. But, when man becomes negligent and forgetful of Allah’s Thikr, shaitaan returns and dominates the mind and heart of man, whispering evil into him. Mentioning this, Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“Verily, shaitaan sits glued to the heart of the Son of Aadam (i.e. man). When he (man) remembers Allah (makes thikr), shaitaan flees. When he (man) becomes forgetful (of thikr), shaitaan (returns and) casts waswasah (evil thoughts) into his mind.”

HONOUR AND RESPECT

“A man who seeks honour and respect in anything besides the ibaadat of Allah, will not die until he has been thoroughly disgraced in his search for that honour and respect.”

(Shaikh Ibraaheem Shahr)

Honour and respect in entirety belong to only Allah Ta'ala. The Qur'aan Majeed says:

“Verily, all izzat (Honour and respect) belongs to only Allah.”

It is Allah Ta'ala who apportions out honour and respect to whomever He wishes, and this bestowal is on the basis of obedience to Him.

A FULLY CULTURED PERSON

Culture is mistakenly equated with secular education and the external facade of niceties when meeting and dealing with people. According to Islam, culture is something far superior and nobler than what materialists understand.

Hadhrat Fuzail Bin Iyaaz (rahmatullah alayh), explaining the meaning of culture said:

“A fully cultured person is one who possesses the following attributes:

- He is obedient to his parents,
- He is kind to his relatives.
- He honours his friends.
- He displays good character to his family and workers.
- He protects his Deen.
- He protects his wealth (i.e. does not waste it) and spends whenever the need arises.
- He spends most of the time at home.
- He abstains from idle talk and futile gatherings.”

NATURAL REMEDIES

CLEANS LUNGS

Eating chilli peppers is good for the lungs and helps clear stuffy noses due to colds, says Irwin Ziment, professor of medicine UCLA. He also recommends hot peppers for emphysema, sinusitis, hay fever, asthma and

chronic bronchitis. Hot foods thin secretions in the air passages.

THE VALUE OF GINGER

FIGHTS NAUSEA Recent tests in Denmark showed that ginger reduced seasick sailors' vomiting by 70%. British research found ginger as effective as drugs at relieving nausea after surgery.

REDUCES INFLAMMATION. In Japan, an anti-inflammatory drug is based on gingerol, the aromatic compound in ginger. A study at Denmark's Odense University found that three quarters of 56 patients with rheumatoid arthritis or muscular discomfort got relief from pain and swelling after taking ginger daily for at least three months.

THINS BLOOD. Several studies suggest ginger makes blood platelets less likely to stick together, helping to prevent blood clots that lead to heart attacks and strokes. A Danish researcher, K.C. Srivastava, found the same effect in cumin, turmeric and especially

cloves, which are stronger than aspirin in this aspect.

(The Hadith too mentions the medicinal properties of cloves – YMMA)

KILLS GERMS. Ginger and turmeric, destroy bacteria including salmonella, a common cause of food poisoning.

AMR BIL MA'ROOF

“When Amr bil Ma’roof – Nahy anil Munkar (Commanding righteousness and prohibiting evil) is abandoned, Allah will appoint over you (Muslims) such oppressors who will neither show respect to your elders nor mercy to your little ones.” (Hadith)

SHAITAAN – THE COMPANION

Allah Ta’ala says in the Qur’aan Shareef:

*“Whoever refrains from the thikr of
Rahmaan, We appoint for him a shaitaan
who becomes his constant companion.”*

When man indulges in futility and becomes involved in sport, amusement and any activity which detracts from Allah's remembrance and the Akhirah, a special shaitaan is created for him. This shaitaan becomes his constant companion and influences him in whatever he does.

Thikrullah forces shaitaan to abandon the thaakir. When a man engages in thikr, shaitaan flees from him in leaps and bounds. But as soon as he becomes neglectful of thikr, shaitaan returns and takes a firm hold of his heart.

ONLY FOR HIS LOVE

Feeding the poor and caring for the destitute are acts of kindness which the Mu'min has to render for only the love and pleasure of Allah Ta'ala. Any other motive contaminates his ikhlaas (sincerity). Allah Ta'ala states:

“They feed the poor, the orphan and the captive for His Love. Verily we feed you for the Sake of Allah.

*We do not intend (to gain) any reward nor
any gratitude from you.”
(Surah Dahr, Aayats 8 and 9)*

This gracious aayat states the motive of feeding the poor. The love and pleasure of Allah Ta’ala are the only motives. However, in this age riya (show) is a widespread disease. While the poor are fed, the motive is to display generosity thereby gaining praise. The intention is pure riya.

It is this riya which has spawned the despicable practice of taking photographs of food parcels being doled out by the relief organisation. The poor are photographed accepting the food hampers. These pictures are then advertised to the world. This is not the method of the Mu’mineen. Publicising charity in this demeaning and unlawful way is of the ways of the kuffaar relief organisations which advertise the slightest act of charity.

On the contrary, we have the clandestine way of the Khulafa-e-Raashideen. They would take care of the destitute and ensure adequate food supplies reach them without displaying and advertising.

Hadhrat Abu Bakr and Hadhrat Umar (radhiyallahu anhum) during their days of the Khilaafat would secretly and incognito deliver foodstuff to the homes of destitute. They would personally do so in darkness. Never did they display their charity.

Islam exhorts concealment of charity, not displaying it to the world like the modernist relief organisations. Such an important act of goodness should not be destroyed by means of an insincere motive.

IRRESPONSIBLE IMAAMS

During Taraaweeh Salaat, many Imaams behave very irresponsibly and despicably by omitting the Dua in Qa'dah and sometimes even the Durood.

There has developed a highly erroneous notion that deletion of the Dua and even the Durood is acceptable. The aim is to finish off the Taraaweesh as quick as possible, hence the Durood and the Dua are viewed lightly. This attitude is haraam because it borders on kufr. When any Deeni act is considered to be insignificant or not important, this attitude is termed istikhfaaf which is kufr.

Although omission of the Durood and Dua does not necessitate Sajdah Sahw, this flagrant and wholesale deletion for no valid reason is sinful. It creates considerable defect in the Salaat.

DESPICABLE

“A man who inspite of his ignorance of the Road leading to Allah, refrains from enquiring about the Road is most despicable.”

(Hadrath Maulana Masihullah Khan)

WOMEN VISITING CEMETERY

It is recorded in Kifaayatush Sha'bi:

Qaadhi was asked about the permissibility of women emerging (from their homes) to visit the cemetery. He said: “The question of permissibility and the corruption of (practices) of this kind should not be asked. Rather, the question of the degree of *la'nat* (curse) settling on the woman should be asked.

Know that whenever she intends to emerge (from her home), she enters into the *la'nat* of Allah and His Malaaikeh. When she (actually) emerges, shaitaan stalks her (and covers) her from every side. When she reaches the quboor (graves), the souls of the dead curse her. When she returns, she does so under the *la'nat* of Allah.”

(Fataawa Taatarkhaaniyyah)

UNDER THE *LA'NAT* AND GHADHAB OF ALLAH

During the holiday season the notorious haunts of people are the beaches, holiday resorts and the casinos. While these are supposed to be the immoral locations of enjoyment and pleasure of the kuffaar, they have become so for even Muslims.

Abandoning the safety and sanctity of their homes, Muslims too in these days are heading in droves to the places of *La'nat* and *Ghadhab*. The evil, immorality and curse of these haunts of holiday should be conspicuous for People of Imaan. This conspicuity leaves no room for argument or doubt. Yet, Muslims aligning themselves with the kuffaar, head for their doom – at least spiritual doom – to the abodes of vice during the so-called festive season of the kuffaar.

THE FIRE OF JAHANNUM

Allah Ta'ala warns in the Qur'aan Majeed:

*“Do not even incline towards the oppressors
(the kuffaar) for then the Fire (of Jahannum)
will overtake you.”
(Surah Hood)*

The illustrious Mufassir, Qaadhi Baidhaawi (rahmatullah alayh); commenting on this aayat says that the slightest degree of inclination to the transgressors by associating with them is vehemently prohibited in this Qur’aanic verse.

But, Muslims do not really require any proof for understanding the prohibition of visiting and ‘enjoying’ the places of immorality and Divine Curse during the season of immorality which the kuffaar refer to as their ‘festive’ season. Imitating the kuffaar in unnecessary things and acts which are not sinful, is also haraam. To what degree will it then be prohibited to emulate them in their evil and immorality?

PLACES OF VICE

These places of vice are haunts on which the *La’nat* (Curse) and *Ghadhab* (Wrath) of

Allah Ta'ala perpetually descend. There is nothing innocent and enjoying in these vile abodes of shaitaaniyat. Liquor, gambling, music, lewdness, nudity, fornication, prostitution and many other evils are all among the vital ingredients of the kuffaar idea of enjoyment, entertainment and merrymaking. All these acts of immorality and vice are perpetrated in full- blast over the holiday and festive season at these haraam places.

By what stretch of imagination can Muslims even justify their participation in such 'enjoyment' and 'entertainment'? With Shaitaan and his myriad of workers and agents in constant attendance and supervision of these dens of vice and immorality, how can those of Imaan abandon their homes of safety and holiness to visit such haraam abodes of *La'nat* and *Ghadhab*? Every thought of Maut and Accountability to Allah Ta'ala is forgotten. The punishment which may commence right here in this world for flagrant transgression cannot be imagined by

those whose spiritual eyes have been blinded by the touch of shaitaan.

WE ARE TO FLEE

Once Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and a group of Sahaabah camped at a desolate place in the wilderness. Some Sahaabah had already cooked food with the water which was available there and others had made wudhu.

When Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) was apprized that this particular place was the location where Allah's Athaab (Punishment) had wiped out an entire nation, he ordered the Sahaabah to immediately move on. No respite was given. In haste, as if a fire was raging, Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) and the Sahaabah (radhiyallahu anhum) scrambled out of the place. It was a place which was destroyed thousands of years ago by the *La'nat* and *Ghadhab* of Allah Ta'ala.

At the time when the Sahaabah camped there, no evil was being committed. It was a

desolate place in the wilderness. But, inspite of the lapse of thousands of years, it remained a place of Divine Curse and Anger, unfit for the habitation of Muslims.

The danger and evil of a place of *La'nat* and *Ghadhab* permeates everything in its vicinity. Hence, Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) ordered that the food which was prepared with the water of the place of *La'nat* should not be eaten. He further ordered that those who had made wudhu with the water of the Place of Wrath, should repeat their wudhu. What now will Muslims understand when they so happily visit the haunts of vice and immorality, and derive fun and pleasure from the kuffaar festivity of fisq and fujoor?

According to the Hadith, even lawful places such as public baths, are haunts for the shayaateen. Now what is your fatwa regarding the places of zina, gambling, liquor, music, immorality, nakedness, etc. – the beaches, the holiday resorts and the casinos?

HARAAM

During the festive season of immorality and evil, danger is present all over. Even the roads are marred with the drunken agents of shaitaan.

Never is it permissible for Muslims to emerge from the safety of their homes during the time of immorality – the kuffaar festive season – to visit Haunts of *La'nat*. When the *La'nat* and *Ghadhab* of Allah Ta'ala descend every second on these evil places of vice, it does not behove people of Imaan to be there.

GHUSAL-E-JANAABAT

It is improper for a Muslim to unnecessarily remain in the state of janaabat for long periods. No one wishes for his maut to arrive while he is in the condition of janaabat. Unnecessary delay in making ghusl, while not sinful, is spiritually harmful. Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said:

“The Angels of Mercy remain very far from those who delay ghushl-e-janaabat. At least they should take wudhu.”

ZAALIMEEN

Hadhrat Sufyaan Thauri (rahmatullah alayh) said that the following types of persons are regarded as zaalimeen (oppressors):

- A person who makes dua for himself and forgets his parents in particular and other Muslims in general.
- A person who does not recite at least 100 verses of the Qur’aan Shareef daily.
- A person who enters a Musjid and comes out without having performed at least two raka’ts Salaat.
- A person who passes by a qabrustaan (cemetery) and fails to make Salaam and Dua for the inmates of the graves.

- A person (village dweller or traveller) who happens to be in the city on Fridays but abstains from performing Jumuah Salaat.
- A person in whose neighbourhood lives an Aalim but he refrains from acquiring knowledge of the Deen from him.
- An unmarried young man who does not acquire knowledge of the Deen.
- A person who eats while his neighbour is hungry.

A HARAAM PICTURE

A picture of a human being or an animal is a haraam picture. Some people have the idea that by only scratching out the eyes, the picture becomes permissible. This is a misconception which even some Ulama entertain.

Jibraeel (alayhis salaam) had instructed Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) to cut off the head of a picture which was on a screen in the house so that the image resembles a tree. It is therefore necessary to efface the entire head. Only then will it cease to be a haraam picture.

THE BENEFIT OF SALAAT IN THE QABR

According to the Hadith, when Munkir and Nakeer, the two interrogating Angels in the grave, arouse the mayyit from his sleep, it will appear to him that it is about Maghrib time.

The Angels will commence their questioning. However, the mayyit who was in love with Salaat here on earth, will respond: *“Your questioning can wait. It is time for my Salaat.”*

The Angels will say: *“We knew that you were going to say this.”*

From this Hadith we understand that Salaat will be a saviour for the mayyit. As a result of Salaat his heart will be fortified by Allah Ta'ala, He will have no fear. The hideous sight of these two frightening Angels will not scare him.

The Mu'min should not forget the Qabr. It is the inevitable abode of every person. Only A'maal-e-Saaliha will be of aid and protection in that terrible abode.

Once after having buried a mayyit, a buzrug heard a loud explosion inside the qabr, and out leapt a large black dog. The Buzrug exclaimed: *"May you be destroyed. What evil are you?"* The dog replied: *"I am the evil deeds of the mayyit. I intended to devour him, but Surah Yaseen which he recited always came to his aid. It struck me, hence the explosion and my flight."*

If our A'maal-e-Saaliha (righteous deeds) are healthy and strong and in abundance, Insha'Allah, it will act as a barrier for our evil deeds. On the other hand, if our evil

overwhelms our virtuous deeds, the former will assume the form of hideous serpents, dogs and other terrifying objects and torture us. Our defective A'maal will not have sufficient power to act as a barrier to protect us against the onslaught of the evil. May Allah Ta'ala protect us from the evil in our nafs and from the terrors of the Grave.

KINDNESS

According to the Hadith, kindness is not to be kind to those who are kind to you. True kindness is to be kind to those who are unkind to you and cause you distress.

THE SWEETNESS OF IMAAN

The *Saahireen* (magicians) of Fir'oun by the fadhl of Allah Ta'ala became instant Auliya. This was purely the taufeeq which Allah Ta'ala bestowed to them for having acknowledged the Haqq which Hadhrat Musaa (alayhis salaam) demonstrated with the *Asaa* (Staff).

When the sorcerers (the *Saahireen*) realised that the feat displayed by Nabi Musaa (alayhis salaam) was not magic (sihr), they fell down in Sajdah and (declared with the greatest conviction that they have accepted Imaan in the ‘Rabb of Musaa and Haroon’.

When Fir’oun saw that his own men who were supposed to have defeated Hadhrat Musaa (alayhis salaam) in the challenge, had abandoned him for the Deen Musaa (alayhis salaam) was preaching, he (Fir’oun) threatened to crucify them – hang them and cut off their hands and feet.

The *Saahireen* responded fearlessly with tranquillity of heart and conviction that in that case they would be returning to their Rabb, Allah Azza Wa Jal. They chose to be hung from trees and tortured to death.

They did not flinch. Torture was sweet for them. They preferred this sweet death to a return into kufr.

This is the meaning of the Sweetness of Imaan mentioned by Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam).

PERPETUAL PUNISHMENT

For some sins there are two types of punishment – a physical punishment and a spiritual punishment.

Consider the sin of shaving the beard. If this act of *fisq* is committed in Daarul Islam, the punishment will be whipping. In addition, there is the punishment of Jahannum if the criminal had not made amends and repented. This is the physical punishment which relates to both this world and the Aakhirah.

Then there is the spiritual punishment which assumes the form of Allah's *la'nat* (curse) on the one who has shaved his beard. This is such a sin which endures every moment. As long as the criminal has not repented and decided to keep a beard, the *la'nat* of Allah Ta'ala perpetually descends on this type of

faasiq. This is the perpetual *athaab* of Allah Ta'ala on this flagrant violator of the Shariah.

FORGETFULNESS

The following are some of the things which create forgetfulness or – failing memory:

- Making wudhu in a place of impurity, e.g. the toilet
- Worldly worries
- Commission of sins
- Engrossment in worldly affairs
- Looking at a hanged person
- Eating much salted meat
- Looking at the sky during the state of janaabat
- Much laughter and joking
- Laughing in the qabrustaan
- Entering the Musjid with the left foot and coming out with the right foot
- Looking at the private parts

- Urinating in the bathroom
- Urinating in the public
- Urinating under a fruit tree, in stagnant water or in ash
- Combing the hair with a broken comb

AN HONOURABLE MAN

When a man has understood the contemptibility of his own nafs, it is a sign that he is honourable by Allah Ta'ala. When a man's faults remain hidden to him, it is a sign of him being dishonourable by Allah Ta'ala.

(Hadhrrat Masihullah Khan)

RUINING CHILDREN

When there is no uniformity of parental ta'leem and tarbiyat (teaching and training), the children are generally ruined. They develop split personalities with cunning, deceit and falsehood becoming outstanding features of their character.

It is for this reason that the mother should never allow her children to conceal anything from their father. The child should be encouraged and ordered to do everything openly, nothing secretly.

Children are mostly in the company and under the influence of their mother. If the mother does things behind her husband's back and teaches her children to conceal her misdeeds from their father, she has opened the door for the moral ruin of her children.

Since such misdeeds are appealing to the nafs, the little children will interpret their mother's actions as being proper and their father's prohibition to be injustice and harshness.

They too will grow up in this mould. Cunning and deceit will become integral constituents of their character. The reformation of such children is indeed a gigantic task.

A DECEITFUL WOMAN

Hadhrat Nabi Musaa (alayhis salaam) had made a special dua on a container of water which was thrown into a pond. The entire pond acquired a miraculous property.

A woman guilty of infidelity would be tested at the pond. If she drank of the water, her face would darken and she would immediately die.

In Bani Israeel there was a pious man who had become suspicious of his wife. He had valid grounds for suspecting his wife to be unfaithful. He reported the matter to the Qaadhi who ordered that the woman be taken to the pond.

The cunning and guilty woman was well aware of the consequences of her drinking of the water. The cunning woman therefore resorted to deceit. She had an identical twin sister. She convinced her sister to go to the pond. The Qaadhi and others would not know the difference. Since the twin sister was

innocent, the water would have no effect on her.

Complying with the wishes of her sister, she went and drank of the water which had no effect on her. The people were surprised and annoyed with the husband whom they now thought to have slandered his wife.

Meanwhile the woman who had drank of the water went to her sister to report what had transpired. As she spoke, her breath reached her sister. Her face darkened and she dropped down dead. Her deceit and infidelity thus became known. Evil cannot be concealed forever. Allah Ta'ala will make it manifest.

TAUFEEQ

Taufeeq is the spiritual willpower and enthusiasm which Allah Ta'ala infuses into the heart of the Mu'min. With *taufeeq* from Allah Ta'ala, the Mu'min acquires the will and determination for *A'maal-e-Saalihah* and for *Istiqaamat* (steadfastness) in whatever

good he does. The acquisition of *taufeeq* depends on the desire for this spiritual ability.

Hadhrat Sahl Tastari (rahmatullah alayh) said:

“You will not acquire the ability for true Taubah (repentance) as long as you do not adopt silence.

You will not acquire silence as long as you do not adopt seclusion.

You will not gain seclusion as long as you do not consume what is only halaal.

You will not gain the concern for consuming only halaal as long as you do not correctly fulfil the rights of Allah (i. e. correctly and punctually observe His Commands).

You will not be able to fulfil the rights of Allah Ta’ala as long as you do not guard your physical limbs.

And whatever I have said, you will not acquire it as long as you do not desire to gain taufeeq from Allah Ta'ala."

Allah Ta'ala has bestowed *Aql* (intelligence) and discernment in man. Along with this he has received the guidance of the Ambiya. It is now left to him to constantly make dua for *taufeeq* and to struggle along the Path to reach Allah Ta'ala in whatever way he is able to.

Allah Ta'ala will strengthen and fortify him as He deems fit.

KINDNESS TO NEIGHBOURS

Faqeeh Abu Laith (rahmatullah alayh) said that kindness to neighbours entails four acts:

- To aid the neighbour when he is in need.
- To refrain from desiring what the neighbour has.

- To refrain from causing the slightest inconvenience to the neighbour.
- To tolerate the inconveniences which the neighbour causes one.

Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) said that Jibrael (alayhis salaam) emphasised the rights of the neighbour so much that he thought that the neighbour would be made an heir in one's estate.